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CONTROL SYSTEM ONLYTHE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
WASHINGTON

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OSD, NGA reviews completed

MORI/CDF
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MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

16 APR 1971

SUBJECT: Soviet ICBM Silo Construction

I continue to be concerned about the magnitude and evident urgency of the new Soviet silo construction program as revealed by recent satellite photography.

The basis for my concern is simply the fact that there are now as many as 50 new missile silos under simultaneous construction in the Soviet Union. This total, which more than doubled our earlier count of the new sites, could and probably will go higher, as study of the latest mission is still underway at CIA and DIA, and as all potential construction areas were not covered by the latest mission. Of particular significance is the identification of at least 30 confirmed and probable silos under construction at a single operational complex in Western Russia. All apparently were started since last August.

Although the missile for which the new silos are intended cannot be determined at this time, they could be for a large new ICBM or a highly modified SS-9. In any event, the new silo is designed to accommodate a large system.

The timing of this construction suggests that a decision, some time last summer, resulted in a slow down or suspension of construction at some of the SS-9 silos, and probably called for the major new silo construction program which we are now observing. This program is marked by unique construction and deployment techniques, as well as concurrent efforts at six operational complexes at least, and at one area at the Tyura Tam Missile Test Center.

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it is evident that we are witnessing a major new Soviet ICBM silo construction program which, if followed through, could have significant implications for our own weapons development programs as well as the ongoing SALT negotiations.

Attached to unsigned memo 29 April, 1971

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